

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-11 COME-00 AGR-20 PA-04 PRS-01

USIA-15 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 OMB-01 DRC-01

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R 080800Z JAN 74

FM AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1785

INFO AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L THESSALONIKI 013

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, ETRD, GR

SUBJECT: MIN AG COMPLETES LOCAL INVESTIGATION OF HALKIDIKI LANE SALE

REF: A) THESSALONIKI 0001; B) THESSALONIKI A-86

1. "ELLINIKOS VORRAS" OF JAN. 6 CARRIES FRONTPAGE ANNOUNCEMENT ON RETURN TO ATHENS PREVIOUS DAY OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE INVESTIGATING SITHONIA LAND SALE TO VARDINOYIANNIS GROUP (REFS). REPORT NOTES THAT COMMITTEE NOW HEADED BY K. ANDROUTSOPOULOS RATHER THAN DIRECTOR OF MIN AG RESETTLEMENT OFFICE ANTONIADIS, AS PREVIOUSLY ANNOUNCED. COMMITTEE HAS CONCLUDED LOCAL INVESTIGATION AND WILL SUBMIT FINDINGS TO MIN AG GEORGEAKIS WHO WILL PRESENT RECOMMENDATIONS TO ADVISORY COUNCIL OF MINISTRY. REPORT NOTES THAT, PRIOR TO DEPARTURE, COMMITTEE VISITED XENOPHON MONASTERY TO EXAMINE DEEDS TO SITHONIA PROPERTY, BUT WAS REFUSED ACCESS TO KEY DOCUMENTS BY MONASTERY OFFICIALS.

2. EARLIER REPORTS CARRIED IN "VORRAS" HAD NOTED SIMILARITY BETWEEN PROPOSED SITHONIA SALE AND 1964 PURCHASE BY VARDINOYIANNIS OF SMALL ISLAND NEAR KALI LIMENES, CRETE AT "ILLEGAL" BELOW-MARKET PRICES. VARDINOYIANNIS HAD ALLEGEDLY AGREED TO PROMOTE LOCAL ECONOMIC
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AND TOURIST DEVELOPMENT, BUT IN FACT ESTABLISHED ONLY

BUNKERING FACILITIES FOR OWN PROFIT.

3. COMMENT: THESSALONIKI MILITARY COMMANDER BGEN TASSOPOULOS
(SEE THESS A-87) INFORMED RELIABLE USIS SOURCE
JAN 5 THAT COMMITTEE ABOVE WAS FORMED ONLY TO FIND
LEGAL PRETEXT FOR CANCELLING SALE. LOCAL OFFICIALS,
INCLUDING TASSOPOULOS, HAVE REFUSED TO SEE VARDINOYANNIS
REPRESENTATIVES AND REPORT THAT CONTROVERSIAL SALE WILL
DEFINITELY BE REVERSED.
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